



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

3616
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10-1-02
#6

Applicant : Ford
Docket No : 1181 US

Serial No : 09/992,981
Filing Date : 11/06/2001
Examiner : Fleming
Confirm. # : 7661

Grp./A.U. : 3616
Title : Driver Side Airbag with a Baffle

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Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

In response to an Office Action dated 07/31/2002, applicants wish the examiner reexamine said patent application in light of the remarks submitted herewith.

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

A. 35 U.S.C. §102

The examiner rejected claims 1-3, 12-14, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Carey et al. Carey teaches an airbag having an inner container 30. In the Office Action, the examiner analogizes the baffle in applicant's invention to the inner container 30. The inner container 30 in Carey et al. is burstable; the inner container fills with inflation gas and when it reaches a threshold pressure, it bursts allowing the inflation gas to exit the inner container and fill the confinement 13. The inner container serves the purpose of absorbing the initial kinetic energy of the fluid flow into the confinement 13 as well as limit the distance that the initial flow of fluid into the confinement 13 moves a portion of the confinement 13.

In main claim 1, applicants claim a baffle having a baffle opening, the baffle opening is aligned with the inflator opening, and the baffle opening is at least one half the area of the inflator opening. Thus in applicants' claimed invention, the baffle does not burst, but rather has an opening that allows inflation gas to flow into the airbag. Carey et al. teaches an inner container 30 that initially does not have any openings or holes for the passage of inflation gas to the confinement 13 or main airbag. In fact, Carey et al. teaches away from applicants'